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ABSTRACT

Text and tables of national elementary school trends illustrate that private elementary school enrollment comprised 11 percent of national elementary enrollment in 1970 and is expected to peak at 12 percent in 1987. Catholic elementary enrollment in 1965-66 was 89 percent of the private school enrollment, but by 1978-79 the figure had declined to 66 percent. State-by-state and regional estimates of Catholic elementary school operating revenues and expenses are shown with the caveat that the value of the contributed services of religious community members or clergy is generally not recorded. Despite fewer students and schools, higher salaries and other costs led to the national per pupil cost in 1982-83 of $782, a 19.8 percent increase over 1980-81. Nationally, sources of revenue for Catholic schools are 46 percent from parish subsidies, 43 percent from tuition, and the remaining 11 percent from fundraising activities. In 1970-71, about 72 percent of the Catholic schools charged less than $100; by 1983-84, only 29 percent charged less than $300. Other figures show that an increasing percentage of Catholic elementary schools have less than 300 pupils; nationally, about half were in the 21-18 pupils-per-teacher range, and 22 percent had less than 21 pupils per teacher. (MLF)

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UNITED STATES CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS & THEIR FINANCES 1984

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NATIONAL CATHOLIC
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INTRODUCTION

Every year since the 1969-1970 school year, the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) has published statistical reports on Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the United States. Extensive data on these schools and other private schools did not exist prior to that time. This data was needed to understand this significant educational sector, to discuss potential forms of federal and state aid, to inform other educational policy issues, and to encourage improved local management. With the assistance of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the United States Office of Education, a data base on Catholic schools was established and remains available in the annual publications of the NCEA.

In 1975, the NCEA and the Curriculum Information Center, Inc., began publishing an additional volume. It combined an annual analysis of data on schools, enrollment, and staffing with several charts and, finally, a directory of Catholic schools. This publication is now produced in cooperation with Fisher Publishing Company of Englewood, Colorado, and Market Data Retrieval of Westport, Connecticut.

This year's publication on elementary school finances is a companion piece to another Data Bank publication entitled United States Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1983-1984. It overviews and analyzes the core school, enrollment, and staffing data of the NCEA historical file on both the elementary and secondary levels. As in the past, where similar information is available, comparisons are made in both publications with other private schools as well as the public sector.

Information for this report is gathered from 166 diocesan offices. Sometimes assistance is provided by state Catholic conferences. To these administrators and their staffs, a well deserved word of appreciation is offered.

Gratitude must also be expressed to the staff at Fisher Publishing Company and Market Data Retrieval for their assistance. LaWanna A. Miller of the NCEA staff also assisted in various parts of this project.

Finally, a special word of thanks to Frank Bredeweg, C.S.B., for his analysis of the data. This is a task he has performed for many years. His patience and precision is appreciated.

Interested parties who want to further analyze Catholic elementary and secondary data should write to the NCEA publication office for information on the availability of other publications and a computer tape. NCEA also has available an on-line computer system capable of generating special statistical reports. Write or phone the NCEA Director of Research for further information on what is available and costs.

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February 14, 1984

UNITED STATES CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AND THEIR FINANCES 1984

by

Frank H. Bredeweg, C.S.B.

The financing of Catholic elementary schools is a question of great importance to both private and public education. Catholic elementary and secondary schools remain the major component of private education, and private education remains a significant force affecting the American educational scene.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), with the cooperation of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) and the Council for American Private Education (CAPE), conducted a survey of private schools for the years 1976-77 through 1978-79. Data was acquired regarding enrollments, staffing, and finances. In one of the earlier reports, the following statements were made by Marie D. Eldridge, NCES Administrator:

> America's system of private schools represents an important component of the nation's elementary and secondary education system. Private schools
> - control about 18% of the schools,
> - enroll about 10% of the students,
> - employ about 11% of the teachers,
> - account for about 10% of the high school graduates,
> - have generally lower pupil/teacher ratios than public schools,
> - tend to be smaller in enrollment size than public schools.

Selected information from those surveys has been summarized and published, and more publications have been promised, but it is clear that the role of private schools should not be underestimated.

National Elementary School Trends

As shown by Table 1, the 4,052,000 private elementary school pupils in 1970 constituted about 11.1% of the 36,629,000 elementary enrollment in the entire country. This percentage declined during the 1970's because of the losses in Catholic school enrollments but increased to 11.8% by 1980. According to projections by the National Center for Education Statistics, this elementary school share will increase to 12% by 1987, and then decline slightly.

Public school enrollments are expected to end their decline in 1985. Any leveling off reflects a kind of stabilization which would facilitate planning, something public school administrators have found very difficult to do during the past decade, as enrollments have been falling.

The declining elementary school enrollments are the result of the population trends of the 1970's, and the fact that there are fewer school-age children. National elementary school enrollments should start to increase in the late 1980's.

Table 2 shows the major components of private elementary education, and the changes between 1965-66 and 1978-79.

Table No. 1
Elementary Enrollment-Public and Private
1970 to 1990

	Grades K-8 (Thousands)				
Reported	Total	Public	%	Private	%
Fall, 1970.....	36,629,000	32,577	88.9	4,052	11.1
1975.....	34,187,000	30,487	89.2	3,700	10.8
1980.....	31,378,000	27,678	88.2	3,700	11.8
Projected					
Fall, 1983.....	30,623,000	27,023	88.2	3,600	11.8
1984.....	30,505,000	26,905	88.2	3,600	11.8
1985.....	30,551,000	26,951	88.2	3,600	11.8
1986.....	31,059,000	27,359	88.0	3,700	11.9
1987.....	31,787,000	27,987	88.1	3,800	12.0
1988.....	32,522,000	28,722	88.3	3,800	11.7
1989.....	33,347,000	29,447	88.3	3,900	11.7
1990.....	34,244,000	30,244	88.3	4,000	11.7

Source: Projections of Education Statistics to 1990-1991, National Center for Education Statistics, p. 34

Table No. 2
Private Elementary School Enrollments-by Affiliation
1965-66 and 1978-79

	1965-66		1978-79	
	Pupils	%	Pupils	%
Catholic Schools	4,370,300	88.7	2,365,000	65.6
Other Church-Related	376,800	7.6	782,300	21.7
Not Church-Related	181,600	3.7	458,700	12.7
Private Elementary	4,928,700	100.0	3,606,000	100.0

Source: Statistics of Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1965-66, National Center for Education Statistics, p. 7

Private Schools in American Education, National Center for Education Statistics, p. 52.

Catholic Elementary School Trends

As Table 2 shows, Catholic elementary enrollment was about 65.6% of private elementary enrollment in 1978-79, a major change from the 88.7% in 1965-66. Recent enrollment declines in Catholic elementary schools have been moderate, and the situation has been relatively stable.

The following is an overview of Catholic elementary education since 1976-77:

	Schools	Pupils	Average Size	Teachers	
				Lay	Religious
1976-77.....	8,265	2,483,000	300	66,146	33,870
1977-78.....	8,223	2,421,000	294	68,221	31,508
1978-79.....	8,159	2,365,000	290	69,584	28,955
1979-80.....	8,100	2,293,000	283	70,356	27,368
1980-81.....	8,043	2,269,000	282	71,841	24,898
1981-82.....	7,996	2,266,000	283	72,981	23,866
1982-83.....	7,950	2,225,000	280	75,225	22,112
1983-84.....	7,937	2,180,000	275	77,684	20,907

Catholic elementary school enrollments have declined an average of 43,000 students from 1976-77 to 1983-84. The percentage of lay teachers over religious has been increasing about 2% per year. In 1976-77, lay teachers comprised 66.1% of the staff. In 1982-83, this percentage was 77.3%, almost a 12% increase over the six years.

Reliability of Financial Data

It should be remembered that the financial figures used here are not "facts", but estimates and guidelines, as are most national statistics. NCEA is often asked for national data regarding Catholic schools, so limited financial information is collected annually from schools and diocesan offices.

All of the estimates are of operating revenues and expenses only. Nothing is said of capital improvements or debt retirement. Also, it is important to note that Catholic elementary schools do not generally record the value of the contributed services of religious community members or diocesan clergy. Consequently, total operating revenues and expenses are understated by the value of these donated services.

Estimate of National Operating Expenses

Catholic elementary schools spent about $1.7 billion for operating expenses in 1982-83. The national per pupil cost rose to $782, a 19.8% increase over 1980-81. The following summarizes the situation:

	Operating Expenses	Enrollment	PP Cost
1970-71.....	$ 806,000,000	3,359,300	$240
1976-77.....	$1,149,000,000	2,483,100	$463
1977-78.....	$1,213,000,000	2,421,200	$500
1978-79.....	$1,295,000,000	2,364,800	$548
1980-81.....	$1,483,000,000	2,269,400	$653
1982-83.....	$1,741,000,000	2,224,900	$782

Despite fewer students and schools, higher salaries and other costs have caused the total annual expenditure to increase.

State by state estimates are shown on the following page.

1982-83	Elementary Schools	Elementary Pupils	Per Pupil Cost	Estimated Expense
Connecticut	164	40,296	$753	$30,357,800
Massachusetts	254	71,408	674	48,148,200
New Hampshire	30	8,114	689	5,590,600
Rhode Island	63	17,488	648	11,332,200
Vermont	11	2,724	771	2,100,200
Maine	22	5,492	654	3,591,800
New England	544	145,522	$695	$101,120,800
Delaware	29	10,717	672	$ 7,201,800
Washington, D.C.	82	24,704	800	19,763,200
Maryland	89	28,527	720	20,539,400
New Jersey	451	128,915	849	109,427,300
New York	897	292,504	736	215,426,200
Pennsylvania	753	224,038	618	138,372,700
Mideast	2,301	709,405	$720	$510,730,600
Illinois	653	195,673	774	$151,529,800
Indiana	201	48,692	880	42,873,100
Michigan	338	93,402	930	86,848,900
Ohio	512	159,575	773	123,336,400
Wisconsin	409	83,910	913	76,611,300
Great Lakes	2,113	581,252	$828	481,199,500
Iowa	144	37,205	859	$ 25,800,000
Kansas	93	19,330	857	16,558,700
Minnesota	225	50,444	1,055	53,234,000
Missouri	279	66,747	744	49,686,000
Nebraska	96	19,194	868	16,651,500
North Dakota	33	5,967	922	5,501,900
South Dakota	27	4,771	982	4,685,700
Plains	897	197,658	$876	$173,117,800
Alabama	48	12,120	606	$ 7,347,500
Arkansas	34	5,422	698	3,784,600
Florida	154	52,169	869	46,730,700
Georgia	32	9,177	874	8,017,200
Kentucky	151	36,607	759	27,777,000
Louisiana	200	81,781	815	66,637,000
Mississippi	36	8,845	831	7,352,300
North Carolina	33	7,512	868	6,523,400
South Carolina	25	5,476	762	4,172,700
Tennessee	43	10,118	948	9,594,100
Virginia	56	17,848	926	16,520,300
West Virginia	35	6,063	968	5,869,000
Southeast	847	253,138	$831	$210,325,800
Alaska	4	788	757	$ 596,500
Arizona	46	13,065	671	8,765,200
California	607	184,180	729	134,275,400
Colorado	53	13,133	898	11,795,200
Hawaii	30	10,640	789	8,395,000
Idaho	12	1,856	720	1,336,300
Montana	20	3,071	930	2,855,700
New Mexico	32	7,172	732	5,253,400
Nevada	11	2,988	759	2,267,900
Oklahoma	28	5,529	878	4,851,900
Oregon	54	9,971	1,040	10,368,700
Texas	253	62,328	816	50,860,100
Utah	7	2,190	664	1,454,200
Washington	84	20,141	1,012	20,380,900
Wyoming	7	1,346	965	1,298,900
West/Far West	1,248	338,398	$782	$ 264,755,300
United States	7,950	2,225,373	$782	$1,741,249,800

Estimate of National Operating Revenue

Of the 165 dioceses in 1982-83, 111 (67%) supplied useable data about the sources of revenue which paid the $1.7 billion operating expenses. Since a few key dioceses are missing, the information reported is not reliable on a state-by-state basis. However, regional figures and estimates seem valid.

As shown in Tables 3 and 4, the major share came from subsidies by the parish to the school ($794.3 million or 45.6%). Tuition and fees paid $743.5 million (42.7%). Fundraising activities provided $105.7 million (6.1%). Diocesan subsidies accounted for $16.8 million nationally. The "Other" revenue category includes all auxiliary activities and services, some of which are offset by expenses.

Regionally, the South and the West have the lowest parish subsidy percentages, receiving most of their revenue from tuition and fees. The Mideast reflects the national average. New England's parish subsidy is well below the national average, but it receives the highest percentage from fundraising activities (10.6%). The Great Lakes and Plains regions receive about one-fourth of their revenue from tuition and about two thirds from parish subsidy.

Comparison of Per Pupil Revenues

Table 5 compares revenue data from previous years on a per pupil basis. Parish subsidies remain the major revenue factor, but the increases in tuition and fees have changed the proportions. In 1969-70, parish subsidy supplied about 63% of the revenue and tuition 27%. By 1973-74, parish subsidy had fallen to 53% and tuition had increased to 38%.

Catholic elementary school revenue patterns today are similar to those established by 1973-74. Although per pupil costs have risen from $350 in 1973-74 to $782 in 1982-83, the percentages have changed relatively little over that nine-year period. The share carried by tuition increased to 42.7% in 1982-83, making parish subsidy and tuition equal partners and cornerstones in the support of Catholic elementary schools.

These national overview figures may well indicate that each Catholic elementary school is gradually identifying its own particular revenue combination and that, as a result, its financial picture is becoming more stable and predictable. Once a school finds the combination which is realistic and feasible, the adjustments from year to year are less difficult to implement. Nationally, this revenue combination is about 46% from the parish, 43% from tuition, and 11% from wherever it can be raised.

It is difficult to compare national per pupil costs and revenues with the public sector, since public schools do not distinguish elementary and secondary finances, and Catholic schools do not book Contributed Services. According to the National Education Association, operating expenditures averaged $2,748 per pupil in 1982-83. The sources of public school revenue were the state (50.3%), local authorities (42.3%), and the federal government (7.4%).

Table No. 3
Elementary School Revenue - Millions of Dollars
1982-83

	Tuition + Fees	Parish Subsidy	Diocesan Subsidy	Fund Raising	Other	Total
New England	$ 51.4	$ 28.9	$ 0.5	$ 10.7	$ 9.6	$ 101.1
Mideast	222.2	231.4	7.2	27.1	23.0	510.7
Great Lakes	127.0	316.1	1.4	19.7	16.8	481.2
Plains	42.6	114.8	1.4	11.3	3.1	173.1
Southeast	133.5	47.5	2.3	14.7	12.2	210.3
West/Far West	166.8	55.6	4.0	22.2	16.2	264.8
United States	$743.5	$794.3	$16.8	$105.7	$80.9	$1,741.2

Table No. 4
Elementary School Revenue - by Percentages
1982-83

	Tuition + Fees	Parish Subsidy	Diocesan Subsidy	Fund Raising	Other	Total
New England	50.8%	28.6%	0.5%	10.6%	9.5%	100.0%
Mideast	43.5	45.3	1.4	5.3	4.5	100.0
Great Lakes	26.4	65.7	0.3	4.1	3.5	100.0
Plains	24.6	66.3	0.8	6.5	1.8	100.0
Southeast	63.5	22.6	1.1	7.0	5.8	100.0
West/Far West	63.0	21.0	1.5	8.4	6.1	100.0
United States	42.7	45.6	1.0	6.1	4.6	100.0

Table No. 5
Per Pupil Revenue
1973-74 to 1982-83

	1973-74		1978-79		1982-83	
Source	Amt.	%	Amt.	%	Amt.	%
Tuition & Fees.....	$135	38.6	$217	39.6	$334	42.7
Parish Subsidy.....	185	52.9	271	49.5	357	45.6
Diocesan Subsidy.....	4	1.1	8	1.5	8	1.0
Fund Raising & Other...	26	7.4	52	9.4	83	10.7
Per Pupil Revenue.....	$350	100.0	$548	100.0	$782	100.0

Past Efforts and Estimates

The following list of estimated national per pupil costs illustrates in general what has been happening to Catholic elementary school finances:

	PP Cost	Increase
1969-70.....	$200	- %
1970-71.....	240	20.0
1972-73.....	315	31.3 (Two Years)
1973-74.....	350	11.1
1974-75.....	385	10.0
1976-77.....	463	20.3 (Two Years)
1977-78.....	500	8.0
1978-79.....	548	9.6
1980-81.....	653	19.2 (Two Years)
1982-83.....	782	19.8 (Two Years)

Annual increases in the per pupil costs have averaged about 10% in the decade since 1972-73. It should be remembered that the financial value of the services contributed by religious community members and diocesan clergy are not included in these costs.

Regional Per Pupil Costs

Per pupil costs are not the perfect indicator of cost trends, but some geographic comparisons may be helpful. The following reviews these costs at two-year intervals:

	1976-77	1978-79	1980-81	1982-83
New England.....	$403	$546	$582	$695
Mideast.....	461	510	617	720
Great Lakes.....	509	613	700	828
Plains.....	498	584	719	876
Southeast.....	425	528	663	831
West/Far West.....	413	505	634	782
United States.....	463	548	653	782

Per pupils costs for the Great Lakes, Plains, and Southeast regions tend to be above the national average. The Plains region has small schools (average size is 220) and the lowest pupil/teacher ratios, factors producing higher per pupil costs. New England and the Mideast tend to have per pupil costs below the national average.

Catholic Elementary School Sizes

According to the annual Market Data Retrieval publications on public and private schools, an increasing percentage of Catholic elementary school have less than 300 pupils. The following totals and percentages summarize the changes over the five years from 1977-78 to 1982-83:

	1977-78		1982-83	
	Number	%	Number	%
Small (under 300).....	5,163	62.8	5,263	66.2
Medium (300-500).....	1,974	24.0	1,828	23.0
Large (over 500).....	1,086	13.2	859	10.8
Total.....	8,223	100.0	7,950	100.0

The figures indicate that, since 1977-78, large and medium size schools have either closed or contributed to the 100 school increase in the number of small schools.

Pupil/Teacher Ratios: Public and Private

The following data published by the National Center for Education Statistics indicates that private schools have a lower national pupil/teacher ratio than public schools. Both ratios are declining:

School Year	Pupils Per Teacher	
	Public	Private
1976-77.....	20.3	18.8
1977-78.....	19.9	18.5
1978-79.....	19.4	18.5

Source: **Selected Public and Private Elementary and Secondary Education Statistics, 1976-77 thru 1978-79,** National Center for Education Statistics

Public school ratios do not distinguish elementary from secondary. However, the NCEA Data Bank for 1978-79 tells us that the Catholic elementary ratio was 24:1 and the secondary ratio was 17:1. Since Catholic school enrollments comprise about two-thirds of the total private school enrollment, it is reasonable to assume that the combined 18.5 pupils per teacher in 1978-79 reflects in large part the continuing efforts of Catholic schools to improve their professional staffs and to reduce class sizes.

Catholic Elementary School Ratios

Statements are still made occasionally that Catholic elementary schools have excessively large classes. The following 1976-77 pupil/teacher ratios in Catholic elementary schools show the approximate class sizes by ranges and regions:

	Under 21:1	21-28	29-36	Over 36:1	All Schools
New England	13.3%	58.4%	26.8%	1.5%	100.0%
Mideast	20.0	45.2	29.3	5.5	100.0
Great Lakes	19.5	56.3	22.9	1.3	100.0
Plains	44.5	50.6	4.8	.1	100.0
Southeast	22.5	52.9	23.6	1.0	100.0
West/Far West	18.1	38.0	33.9	10.0	100.0
United States	22.1	49.4	24.8	3.7	100.0

Nationally, about half (49.4%) of all Catholic elementary schools were in the 21-28 pupils per teacher range in 1976-77, the last available data. A large percentage (22.1%) had less than 21 pupils per teacher. On the basis of these figures, it appears that classes are manageable and teachable.

Regionally, most New England schools (58.4%) were in the 21-28 pupils per teacher range, as were most of the schools in the Great Lakes region (56.3%). The Plains had 44.5% of its schools with a ratio of less than 21 pupils per teacher. The Southeast was very close to the national average. The West had about 34% in the 29-36 range, and 10% in the over 36:1 range. Economically, most schools cannot afford to structure class sizes too small. A balance must be found that is agreeable to parents, students, administrators, and board members.

Tuition Charges

Tuition policies and charges are usually of special interest in any discussion of Catholic elementary school finances. On the basis of about 82% reporting, the following is a comparison of tuition and basic fee charges for 1981-82 and the current year:

Tuition Range	1981-82 Schools	1981-82 %	1983-84 Schools	1983-84 %
Under $100.....	1,000	12.5	794	10.0
100-199.....	816	10.2	651	8.2
200-299.....	1,199	15.0	865	10.9
300-399.....	1,264	15.8	960	12.1
400-499.....	1,263	15.8	1,030	13.0
500-599.....	1,079	13.5	1,034	13.0
600-799.....	1,031	12.9	1,563	19.7
800-999.....	192	2.4	714	9.0
$1,000 and over.....	152	1.9	325	4.1
Total.....	7,996	100.0	7,937	100.0

Tuition policies have been forced to change greatly since the 1960's. In 1970-71, about 72% of the schools charged less than $100. In 1973-74, about 70% charged less than $200. By 1976-77, about half of the Catholic elementary schools charged over $200. For more extensive treatment of Catholic school tuition policies and charges, we refer you to previous publications concerning a particular period.

In this current 1983-84 school year, the percentage of schools in each tuition range below $600 has declined since 1981-82. The percentage of schools in the $600-800 range has increased from 12.9% to 19.7%. The percentage of schools over $800 has increased from 4.3% to 13.1%.

Improved Financial Management

Catholic elementary schools were supported traditionally by large subsidies from the parish, low tuition charges, and the contributed services of the Sisters. Financial troubles were usually resolved by the pastor or the bishop. Today, several changes have produced a more complex financial picture. The major factors have been the declining number of women religious in the schools, the recognized need for higher salaries, inflation, the movement of people to the suburbs where new construction was costly, and a changed theological atmosphere in which it is acceptable to attend a public school.

To meet these challenges, Catholic schools and dioceses have vastly improved the quality of their financial information, and have used this information to analyze and manage their situation. Once the school subsidy is agreed upon, most parishes now structure the school to resolve its own financial problems, creating new responsibilities for administrators and board members. Some parishioners are trained professionals who, together with the diocesan school office, assist with the accounting, budgeting, and management functions. It is still difficult to raise the needed revenue, but Catholic elementary schools seem to be much more in control of their finances through better management.

Copies of this publication may be obtained by writing:

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